

Safety is No Accident

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Electrical Safety Fair
set for April



A Houston Lighting & Power employee shows the danger of electricity during last year's Electrical Safety Fair.

Electrical safety fair set for April

By Rindy Carmichael

JSC will host its second annual Electrical Safety Fair from 10 a.m.-2 p.m. April 2 in the Teague Auditorium. Co-sponsored by Houston Lighting & Power, the event is designed to educate employees about both residential and work-related electrical safety issues. "Electricity is our most useful and convenient form of energy," said John McGee, electrical safety standards instructor for the NASA Safety Training Center. "However, to fully appreciate it, we must understand and control the hazards it presents. By taking the time to learn and practice simple electrical safety guidelines, we can protect ourselves and our co-workers. These same guidelines will also protect us at home."

HL&P will sponsor various booths dealing with electrical characteristics. In addition,

classes will be held throughout the day covering a variety of topics such as the power of electricity, hurricane safety tips, energy management and energy and the environment. There also will be demonstrations from the HL&P arc truck. The exhibit was popular at last year's fair and is recommended for those employees who might be exposed to high voltage or work in the vicinity of high voltage. Other booths will include participants from the Health, Safety and Environmental Compliance Office; Emergency Preparedness; Kelsey-Seybold; Total Health; Johnson Controls World Services; Safety Learning Center and the Center of Excellence in Occupational Safety and Health.

The fair is intended to be fun as well as educational. Drawings will be held throughout the day for electrical safety-related items and a grand drawing will be for a framed astronaut print. All employees are invited. For more information, call x45078.

Fitness Challenge to kick off today, help fight body fat battle

By Larry Wier

Today kicks off the 1996 Fitness Challenge and many JSC employees can fight the body fat battle by earning the Presidential Sports Award and logging fitness activity. The Fitness Challenge runs from today until Aug. 31 and promotes physical activity among NASA employees nationwide. Employees who qualify for the award also will be entered into a drawing for a \$100 gift certificate from Oshmans Super Store. Eleven gift certificates will be awarded to participants.

There are more than 60 activities in which employees may sign-up to participate. The most popular activity is the sports/fitness category that requires 50 hours of physical activity during the four-month period. This may include exercise on the stationary bike, weight lifting, aerobics or any other combination an employee would like to try.

The Gilruth fitness staff will complete logs for individuals who use the Gilruth Center. Other employees may complete a log that they obtain from the fitness staff.

The Fitness Challenge follows a recent survey conducted by JSC's Health-Related Fitness staff which revealed that the number of employees at JSC who are overweight has jumped to 26 percent in the past 10 years.

With some 34 percent of all Americans now considered overweight, the health danger of excess body fat has become a public concern. In response to this concern, JSC's Health-Related Fitness staff is offering courses in Nutrition Intervention and Complete Weight Control.

Overweight was defined by a Body Mass Index at or exceeding 27.8 in men and 27.3 in women. The BMI is a ratio of body weight in kilograms and the squared height in meters.

JSC researchers compared the medical examination records of the 1983 workforce with those of the 1993 workforce. The comparison showed

that although there was no age difference between the groups, the mean body weight in 1993 was higher by 5.4 pounds in men and 8.4 pounds in women. The overweight prevalence at JSC was lower than the national average (19.5 percent in 1983 and 26.1 percent in 1993), and it rose at a lower rate (6 percent a year compared to the national 8 percent increase).

A statistical comparison of the employees who were working here for the entire 10 years showed that a 10-year weight gain was independently related (that is despite the connection to other factors, such as age and sex) to higher blood pressure, cholesterol, triglycerides and glucose.

So how does a person maintain a healthy body weight? The emphasis must be on physical activity first and then on healthy eating. The key is exercise. As a rule, people confront the problem of weight control by going on a diet. However, people who go on a diet almost always fail; they do not follow up with exercise, and they do not maintain a healthy weight in the long run.

On the other hand, those who start with an exercise routine and stick with it, invariably adopt healthier eating habits. The most prudent plan is to combine a moderately progressive exercise program with a moderate, nondrastic, reduction in caloric intake.

The Health-Related Fitness Office has three programs addressing weight loss and weight control. The Health-Related Fitness Courses (I, II and III) are structured classes of combined education and individually prescribed exercise programs. The Nutrition Intervention Program is a six-week series of lectures, emphasizing the role of diet in blood chemistry. The Complete Weight Control Program uses a rotating series of instructors with expertise in the four weight control basics: exercise, nutrition, medicine and behavior. These programs have a proven record in weight control and health. For information on health related fitness courses and the 1996 Fitness Challenge, contact the Health-Related Fitness Staff at x30301 or Mail Code AW-9.

Second annual safety day plans under way

The 1996 Safety and Total Health Day planning committee is looking for volunteers to help with any of the working groups that are coordinating activities for the event. "Dividing tasks into manageable pieces that a subgroup of people work completely was felt to be the most efficient course of action," said committee chairman Larry Neu.

The groups will be responsible for advertising; entertainment, refreshments and giveaways; logistics and maps; booth recruitment and overall scripting and scheduling.

"The more people we have now during the planning stage to provide inputs and ideas to improve our program will allow the stand-down day to be productive, enlightening and useful to all employees," Neu said.

Set for Oct. 23, this year's event will combine the Safety Awareness Day with the Total Health Pond Party.

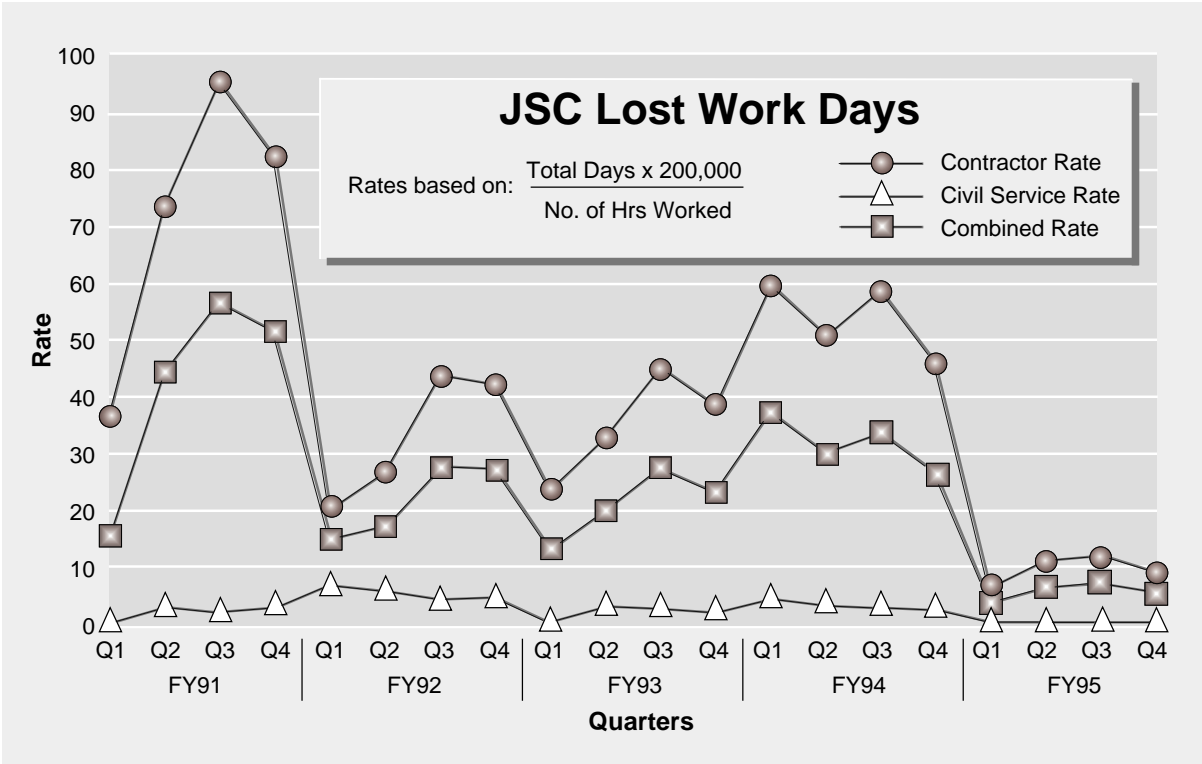
"By combining the best elements of these previous events, the 1996 stand-down day should prove to be enlightening while also enjoyable," Neu added.

The initial plan for the day includes

interactive displays for employee involvement and education, informational booths and briefings, self evaluation of safety plans and health check-ups, and self inspections. The feedback from last year's attendees is being analyzed to develop central themes for 1996.

Many on-site and off-site organizations will be asked to provide and staff a booth that will deal with a particular health or safety issue that can be shared with the rest of their fellow employees. In addition, many companies and outside organizations will be invited to set up booths and display educational items concerning safety and health.

One or two representatives from each group will meet with the planning committee on a periodic basis to brief what their group is doing. Each group can detail progress and make sure the other subgroups are working toward the same general "big picture." All members of groups will meet every six weeks. Any JSC employee wanting to participate in planning activities can contact Neu at x30559 for information on meeting times and locations.



LOST DAYS RATE IMPROVING-Since the beginning of fiscal year 95, the JSC Lost Work Day Severity Rate has improved. The Lost Work Day Severity Rate is the total number of lost work days per 100 employees per year. Lost work days are considered to be the number of full days an employee is away from work due to a mishap. Data is collected by JSC's Health, Safety, and Environmental Compliance Office, then calculated and published monthly. The improvement trend follows the new emphasis in safety by management and employees, which has increased employee awareness and involvement and resulted in fewer lost work days. Employees will soon be able to track the rate on the JSC Safety Home Page at <http://www.jsc.nasa.gov/jsc/safety/>